

Oxymoron

What is an **oxymoron**?
sharp dull

- Two words put together that contradict each other
- Examples? bittersweet sophomore = wise fool
"Microsoft Works" act naturally

Oxymoronic situations

- A sick doctor who makes her sickness be the focus of our visit
- A troubled therapist who makes his trouble be the focus of our visit
- Making demands of someone who is in authority over us

How might we do this with God?

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First Things First

Luke 10:38-42

bib.ly/Lu10.NIV
tiny.cc/cmchandouts

2

Luke

Luke's big purpose

- That we would **live by the certainty** that Jesus is the Son of God who lived a perfect life, died for us, and rose to life again to **rule over all creation**

The “Travel Narrative” in Luke (9:51-19:27)

- An advanced class in being a disciple (follower) of Jesus
- **They had learned:** Jesus is God's Messiah, the One who is God and will bring God's Kingdom to humanity
- **They hadn't yet learned:** how to live according to this reality

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Luke 10:38-42

As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, “Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!”

“Martha, Martha,” the Lord answered, “you are worried and upset about many things, but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.”

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What not to be like: Martha

- **“Distracted”**
 - From what?
 - Being a genuine host (complaining to an honored guest??)
 - Listening to Jesus
 - Helping others listen to Jesus
 - Helping Jesus use His time as He chose
- **“Worried and upset”**
 - About unfair/unjust treatment
- **Martha was “standing over” Jesus**
 - Accusing Him of not caring
 - Telling Him what He should be doing
 - ***“Lord, do this” is an oxymoron***

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What to be like: Mary

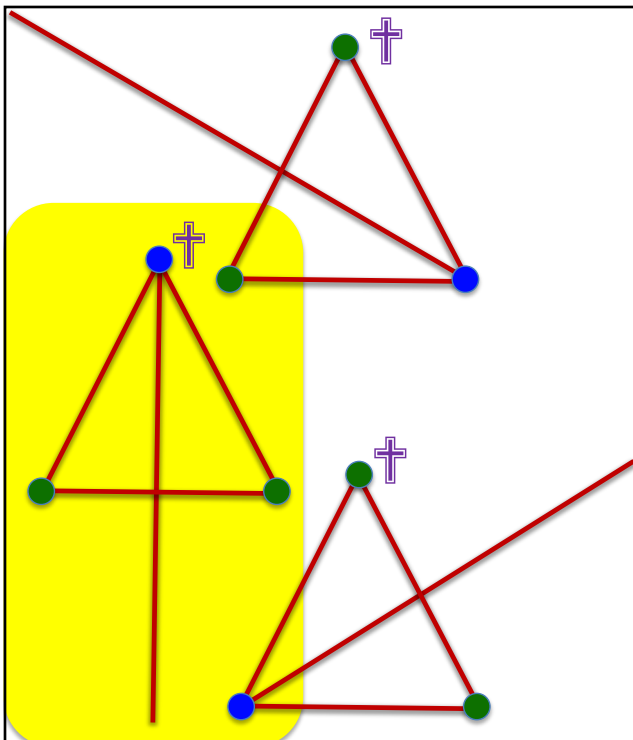
- **“Sit at the Lord’s feet”**
 - Not merely a physical location
 - An idiom: **live as a follower of Jesus**
 - Radical for a woman! Yet Luke doesn’t highlight it
- **“Listening to His Word” (NIV: “what he said”)**
 - Not merely having words reach our brains
 - It is to trust and obey His teaching and His life
 - “A voice came from the cloud, saying, ‘This is my Son, whom I have chosen; **listen to him.**’ ” *Luke 9:35*
- Mary was **living as a follower of Jesus**
- **God will protect her opportunity to do that**

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The Big Idea

**Truly living as a Christian is
active submission to Jesus**

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Draw an arrow with 4 straight lines that includes these 3 dots

It is possible to include **Jesus** in our lives without actually following Jesus

It is possible to have all our 'dots' be biblical without actually following Jesus (**theology, systemic racism, world missions, justice, mercy, ...**)

We must actually follow Jesus from first to last to be a genuine follower of Jesus

Martha's problem was not a '**doing**' problem but a '**following**' problem

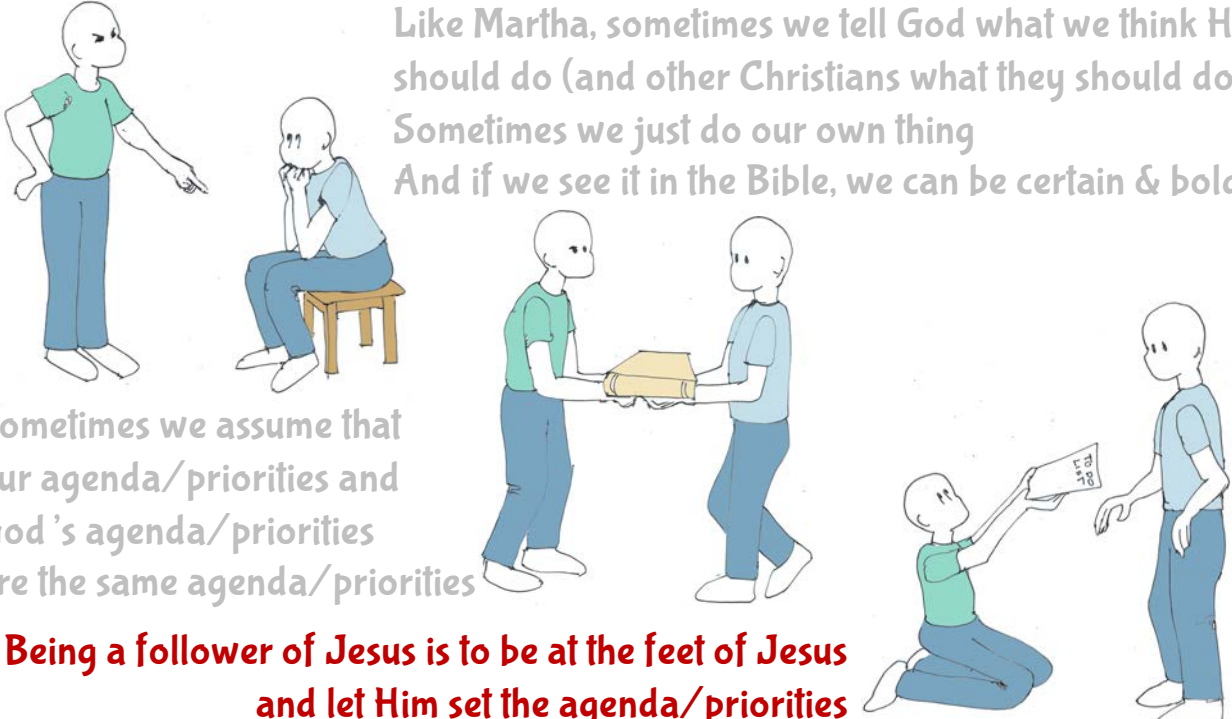
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Like Martha, sometimes we tell God what we think He should do (and other Christians what they should do)
Sometimes we just do our own thing
And if we see it in the Bible, we can be certain & bold!

Sometimes we assume that our agenda/priorities and God's agenda/priorities are the same agenda/priorities

Being a follower of Jesus is to be at the feet of Jesus and let Him set the agenda/priorities

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Jesus' agenda and Our agenda

- We live according to our agenda
 - Sometimes our agenda is not on Jesus' agenda
 - our pleasure or pride or pain or personal focus or ...
 - Sometimes we find our agenda in the Bible (rightly or wrongly), so we become certain and self-righteous in making it the priority
 - Often we want Jesus to help us with our agenda (in prayer)
 - Often we put our agenda before His agenda (in thought & action)

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Jesus' agenda and Our agenda

- We live according to our agenda
- Jesus has His own agenda, and His is *always* better
 - He is all good // every part of us is less than His goodness
 - He is all knowing // we just see partial reflections
 - He is perfectly wise & skillful // we are so clumsy
 - Just because we can find a verse in the Bible, or many verses in the Bible, that seem to support our agenda...
 - It doesn't mean that we actually understand His agenda
 - It doesn't mean that now is the time when it will be His focus
 - When is the right time to give attention to _____?
 - What is the right way to give attention to _____?
 - We need discernment and sensitivity to the Holy Spirit

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Jesus' agenda and Our agenda

- We live according to our agenda
- Jesus has His own agenda, and His is *always* better
- When we put our agenda first, no matter how good it is, we are not treating Him as "Lord"
 - **Martha:** make this family situation fairer
 - **Man:** make my brother be just in dividing our inheritance
 - **Prodigal's brother:** reward "better" people more
 - **Peter:** don't make my life harder than other peoples' lives
 - **Paul:** take away this troublesome weakness in my life
 - ***Jesus said "No" to all these requests!***

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Submitting to God's agenda completely

- **Job:** suffered unspeakable losses he didn't deserve
 - Then he fell to the ground in worship and said:
 “Naked I came from my mother's womb,
 and naked I will depart.
 The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away;
 may the name of the Lord be praised.”
 In all this, ***Job did not sin by charging God with wrongdoing.***” *Job 1:21-22*
 - In contrast: Martha accused Jesus of the wrongdoing of not caring about her

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Submitting to God's agenda completely

- **Job:** suffered unspeakable losses he didn't deserve
- **Mary the mother of Jesus:** was told to live out God's impossible plan that would completely disrupt her life
 - “I am the Lord's servant,” Mary answered.
 “May your word to me be fulfilled.” *Luke 1:34*

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Submitting to God's agenda completely

- **Job:** suffered unspeakable losses he didn't deserve
- **Mary the mother of Jesus:** was told to live out God's impossible plan that would completely disrupt her life
- **Paul:** when God repeatedly refused to remove a deeply troubling weakness
 - “Therefore I will boast all the more **gladly about my weaknesses**, so that **Christ's power may rest on me**. That is why, **for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties**. For when I am weak, then I am strong.” *2 Corinthians 12:9-10*

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The Big Idea

**Truly living as a Christian is
active submission to Jesus**

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Application

Live every day at the feet of Jesus

- In full submission to His wisdom and His will
 - What does He care most about?
 - What is His focus for me and for us today?
 - How am I, and how are we, to live it out today?
 - It requires...
 - deep and genuine listening to God
 - in the Bible
 - from His people
 - by the Spirit
 - We will hear and follow something
 - Is it Jesus?

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Application

Live every day at the feet of Jesus

- In full submission to His wisdom and His will
- The Lord's Prayer: our daily focus...
 - "Your name be hallowed" not ours
 - "Your kingdom come" not ours
 - "Your will be done" not ours
 - "Give us our needs for today" not 'make us great and rich'
 - "Forgive us our sins" not 'judge our enemies'
 - "Help us to forgive our enemies" not getting even
 - "Deliver us from evil/the evil one" not 'make us powerful'

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Application

Live every day at the feet of Jesus

- In full submission to His wisdom and His will
- The Lord's Prayer: our daily focus...
- God's first priority might not be (**and usually isn't**)...
 - to solve the part of the world that is most bothersome to us
 - whether it is unfairness, or sickness, or weakness, or systemic racism, or poverty, or war, or the environment, or conflict, or ...
 - to make life less painful or problematic for us
 - to fulfill our dreams or desires

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Application

Live every day at the feet of Jesus

- In full submission to His wisdom and His will
- The Lord's Prayer: our daily focus...
- God's first priority might not be...
- God does promise...
 - to love you **always**
 - to be with you **always**
 - to work **everything** together for your good in My time
 - especially in transforming YOU to be more like ME
 - to bring the day when all pain and suffering and loss will be **gone completely and forever**

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Application

Live every day at the feet of Jesus

- In full submission to His wisdom and His will
- The Lord's Prayer: our daily focus...
- God's first priority might not be...
- God does promise...
- **How do we know we can trust Jesus this much?**
 - It takes great faith, courage, and trust in Jesus!
 - It takes active listening and following

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How do we know we can trust Jesus this much?

- Look at the cross
 - Jesus lived at the feet of the Father
 - In full submission to His wisdom and His will
 - Even when it meant suffering and death
 - “Jesus withdrew about a stone's throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed, ‘Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; *yet not my will, but yours be done.*’” *Luke 22:41–42*
 - He was later raised to highest glory!
 - He was later raised to give us life and to intercede for us
 - We are to submit fully to this One who submitted fully to the Father to give us true life in Him

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Truly living as a Christian is active submission to Jesus

**The only way to live as Jesus intends
is to actively submit to Him each day**

**The only way to hear His Word today is to let go of our agenda
and deeply listen to Him (in His Word with His people by His Spirit)**

**There is no other place of such abounding joy and freedom and hope
than at the feet of Jesus**

**The only way to really live the life God intends
is to live at the feet of Jesus, and He won't let anyone take that away**